

NEWS COLUMN

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Calf Value Discovery sign-up deadline is Oct. 10

Oct. 10 is the deadline to sign up for South Dakota State University's 2008-09 Calf Value Discovery Program.

SDSU Extension Beef Specialist Cody Wright said the program lets producers better assess the value of their cattle and gain valuable carcass and feedlot performance information to aid in management decisions.

Learn more about the Calf Value Discovery Program and download a registration form at an SDSU Web site, <http://ars.sdstate.edu/extbeef/CVD.htm>.

Wright said producers consign a minimum of five steers weighing 500 to 800 pounds to the CVD Program. Cattle will be fed in an accelerated finishing program at VanderWal Yards, Bruce, S.D.

Cattle will be received at VanderWal Yards between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Central Time on Nov. 4-5. Transportation to VanderWal Yards is the owner's responsibility.

SDSU personnel will weigh cattle periodically and provide cattle owners with performance updates and individual expenses. Feed, yardage and veterinary bills will be financed, and any death loss will be shared among all participants in the project.

Cattle will be sold in market groups with sale dates generally beginning about May 15. All cattle will be sold on a grid price system. Producers will receive data on feedlot performance and carcass quality after marketing. Tenderness evaluation will be offered for an additional fee.

The cattle must be dehorned, castrated and healed prior to feedlot arrival. Calves do not need to be weaned or pre-conditioned to participate, but producers should inform SDSU if the calves will be weaned or not prior to arrival.

There is a \$15 per head, non-refundable registration fee for the program, Wright said. Make checks payable to: SDSU Department of Animal and Range Sciences. Send payment and registration to Cody Wright, South Dakota State University, Box 2170, Brookings, SD 57007. Contact Wright at (605) 688-5448 for more information.

Water analysis for livestock suitability

A new publication from South Dakota State University can help producers understand whether their water is suitable for livestock.

SDSU publication C274-1, "Interpretation of Water Analysis for Livestock Suitability," is online at this link:

<http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/C274.pdf>. Or ask at your county Extension office.

Authors are David German of the Water Resources Institute at South Dakota State University, Nancy Thiex of SDSU's Olson Biochemistry Laboratories, and SDSU Extension Beef Specialist Cody Wright.

The publication discusses water consumption by class of livestock; water quality; conductivity/total dissolved solids; sulfates; sodium; alkalinity; hardness; nitrates; and other factors.

The guide includes worksheets for total sulfur intake and for water interpretation summaries.

The guide addresses sodium levels in water, as well as alkalinity and hardness. Comparing alkalinity and hardness levels is important because of interactions between sulfates and alkalinity. For example, the laxative effects of high-sulfate water are more pronounced in water with higher alkalinity levels. A table in the guide illustrates this interaction.

Nitrate levels and other factors also are considered in the guide, and it addresses all livestock operations, from poultry to cattle.